

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MARTIN 00246 191921Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 A-01 SCA-01 INR-07 PER-03
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R 191300Z JUL 77
FM AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2638

UNCLAS MARTINIQUE 0246

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, MB
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSULAR POSE IN GUADELOUPE

REF: PARIS 20715

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MARTINIQUE A-32 DATED JULY 8, 1977.
REQUESTED DEPT TO PASS PARIS.

QUOTE: DURING A RECENT VISIT TO GUADELOUPE, THE REPORTING OFFICER WAS APPROACHED BY OFFICIALS IN THE PREFECTURE AT BASSE-TERRE AND BY OFFICERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY AT POINTE-A-PITRE ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD OF OPENING A "BRANCH OFFICE" OF THE CONSULATE IN GUADELOUPE. OFFICERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE STATED THEY EXPECTED TO ASK THE FRENCH FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRY AND THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS AND TERRITORIES TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO ESTABLISH CONSULAR REPRESENTATION IN GUADELOUPE. IN THE INTERVAL, WE HAVE RECEIVED COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE INITIATED BY THE POINTE-A-PITRE CHAMBER CONCERNING THE MATTER. AN UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF THE LETTER TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRY IS ENCLOSED.

AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, THE MATTER OF U.S. CONSULAR REPRESENTATION IN GUADELOUPE HAS COME UP FROM TIME TO TIME IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. THE PROBLEM IS CAUSED LARGELY BY THE FACT THAT WE ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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SOMETIMES HAMPERED IN RESPONDING TO CONSULAR PROBLEMS IN GUADELOUPE BECAUSE THE ISLAND IS SOME 150 MILES FROM US. WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT IN RECENT YEARS THE PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN FEWER BECAUSE OF THE INCREASED AIR SERVICE BETWEEN THE FRENCH DEPARTMENTS TO WHICH WE ARE ACCREDITED, AND DURING THE REPORTING OFFICER'S TOUR OF DUTY, THE MATTER OF A "BRANCH CONSULATE" HAS BEEN BROACHED ON OCCASION, BUT NEVER SERIOUSLY RAISED, BY FRENCH

OFFICERS IN GUADELOUPE.

ON THE OCCASIONS WHEN WE HAVE BEEN QUESTIONED ABOUT THE MATTER, WE HAVE REPLIED THAT GIVEN THE COSTS OF MAINTAINING A CONSULATE AND GIVEN THE FACT THAT WE ARE NORMALLY ABLE TO PROVIDE SATISFACTORY CONSULAR SERVICES FOR GUADELOUPE, IT WOULD BE MOST UNLIKELY THAT THE DEPT WOULD ESTABLISH ANOTHER CONSULATE THERE AT LEAST FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. WE HAVE AVOIDED ANY DISCUSSION ABOUT ESTABLISHING A CONSULAR AGENT THERE BECAUSE, INsofar AS WE ARE AWARE, A CONSULAR AGENT WOULD, IN FACT, BE OF RELATIVELY LITTLE VALUE. THE BULK OF OUR CONSULAR ACTIVITIES IN GUADELOUPE TENDS TO BE VISAS, WITH SOME WELFARE AND PROTECTION WORK; THERE ARE RELATIVELY FEW U.S. CITIZENS RESIDING IN GUADELOUPE (ABOUT 200), AND WE EXPERIENCE FEW PROBLEMS WITH THE SEVERAL THOUSAND U.S. TOURISTS WHO VISIT THE ISLAND ANNUALLY.

WE HAVE SOME SYMPATHY WITH FRENCH OFFICIALS AND FRENCH BUSINESSMEN IN GUADELOUPE WHO FEEL THAT THE U.S. SHOULD BE OFFICIALLY REPRESENTED THERE. UNFORTUNATELY, THE VIEWS OF GUADELOUPEANS PARTIALLY ARISE FROM THE JEALOUSY WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN THE TWO DEPARTMENTS OF MARTINIQUE AND GUADELOUPE, AND THIS RESULTS IN THE BELIEF IN GUADELOUPE THAT SOMEHOW THE U.S. HAS SLIGHTED THE ISLAND. WITH 330,000 INHABITANTS, GUADELOUPE IS QUITE AS IMPORTANT ECONOMICALLY AS MARTINIQUE AND, GIVEN ITS HOTEL BUILDING PROGRAM IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, IT MAY WELL ATTRACT FAR MORE U.S. TOURISTS THAN MARTINIQUE IN THE COMING YEARS. WE DOUBT, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT

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U.S.-GUADELOUPE COMMERCIAL OR TRADE RELATIONS WILL INCREASE ENOUGH IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE TO JUSTIFY SEPARATE U.S. CONSULAR REPRESENTATION.

WE WILL BE ABLE TO MEET THE NEED FOR BETTER CONSULAR SERVICES IN GUADELOUPE IF A THIRD OFFICER IS ASSIGNED HERE IN THE NEXT YEAR, A RECOMMENDATION WHICH WE FORWARDED WITH OUR FY-78 CONSULAR PACKAGE. A THIRD OFFICER WILL PERMIT MORE REGULAR AND LONGER CONSULAR VISITS TO POINTE-A-PITRE AND BASSE-TERRE AND MAKE POSSIBLE, HOPEFULLY, A BETTER BASIS FOR CLOSER RELATIONS AND BETTER PERSONAL CONTACTS. IT IS LIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT CIRCLES IN GUADELOUPE WILL CONTINUE TO FEEL NEGLECTED AS LONG AS THE CONSULATE REMAINS IN FORT-DE-FRANCE. THE IDEAL SOLUTION, WE THINK, WOULD BE TO ESTABLISH A SMALL USIS LIBRARY IN POINTE-A-PITRE, A STEP WHICH WOULD CREATE A SMALL AMERICAN PRESENCE IN GUADELOUPE WHICH WOULD BE SUFFICIENTLY OFFICIAL TO GIVE GUADELOUPE THE IMPRESSION THAT IT IS NO LONGER A "SECOND RATE" DEPARTMENT IN OUR EYES. THIS IS A MATTER WHICH THE CONSULATE SHOULD PERIODICALLY REVIEW OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS

END QUOTES

HACKLETON

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